

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 06266 311808Z
ACTION ARA-14

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DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PN
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FOLLOWING FROM USIS/PANAMA DATED 31 AUG 77 SENT ACTION USINFO
WASHDC INFO SECSTATE REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO/ACTION:

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MEDIA REACTION

1-CANAL TREATY: ALL MORNINGERS AUG. 31 FRONT PAGE LIST OF OFFICIAL
PARTY PLANNING TO ATTEND TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY. ALL PAPERS ALSO
FRONT PAGE WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF PRES. CARTER'S PLANS TO HOLD STATE
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DINNER FOR LATAM REPRESENTATIVES AT CEREMONY. SEMI-INDEPENDENT LA
ESTRELLA HEADS AP STORY, "CARTER'S DIPLOMATIC TRIUMPH NEARS; MORE
THAN 20 LEADERS WILL ATTEND."

2-ESTRELLA EDIT CALLS FOR AN END TO ANTI-AMERICAN TALK IN PANAMA:
"WE HAVE ALWAYS FELT, CERTAINLY, BITTERNESS, MORAL PAIN AND FRUSTRA-
TION...FOR WAY IN WHICH US ABUSED ITS POSITION OF POWER, PROVOK-

ING FEELINGS OF RESENTMENT IN MANY PANAMANIAN. BUT PANAMANIAN PEOPLE...HAVE NEVER FELT HATE...FOR US." ESTRELLA CAUTIONS, "WE BELIEVE IT IMPROPER AND ABOVE ALL COUNTERPRODUCTIVE THAT AT THIS TIME ANYONE SHOULD CONTINUE TO INSULT AND OFFEND THE US WITH IRRITATING EXPRESSIONS WHICH, BESIDES NOT REFLECTING...TRUE NATIONAL SENTIMENT, CAN CONTRIBUTE TO DELAYING FINAL STEP OF NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH MUST CULMINATE WITH RATIFICATION BY SENATE." STRONG OPPONENTS OF TREATY EXIST, CONTINUES LA ESTRELLA, "AND IF THESE CAN PRESENT ARGUMENT TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION THAT PANAMANIAN PEOPLE ARE HOSTILE TOWARD US, IT IS DIFFICULT TO HOPE THAT TREATY WILL BE RATIFIED."

3-ESTRELLA CONCLUDES, "IF ATTITUDE OF GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON TOWARD US HAS CHANGED IN SUBSTANTIAL FORM, SO SHOULD CHANGE OURS TOO, ABANDONING TRITE EXPRESSIONS WHOSE REPETITION COULD LEAD US LEGISLATORS TO...THINK MISTAKENLY THAT WE HATE EVERYTHING THE US REPRESENTS, WHICH IS IN NO WAY TRUE."

4-PRO-GOP CRITICA AND MATUTINO EDITS TAKE LINE THAT TREATY WILL BE APPROVED, BOTH BY SENATE AND PANAMANIAN PLEBESCENT. ON RATIFICATION, CRITICA SAYS, "ANY PREDICTION IS VERY DIFFICULT, BUT FROM HERE WE WATCH THINGS WITH CALM, AND DEDUCT CONSEQUENCES ON BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE OF CARTER'S STUBBORNESS AND OF DANGER WHICH COLONIALIST GRYPALLCONS REPRESENT."

5-MATUTINO EDIT PREDICTS "MUCH MORE THAN 80 PER CENT OF VOTERS WILL ACCEPT TREATY" IN PANAMANIAN PREBESCENT, AND SENATE WILL RATIFY
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TREATY. MATUTINO BASES OPTIMISM ABOUT RATIFICATION ON CARTER'S "AGILE DEFENSE AND CATAPULTING OFFENSE." DEFEAT OF ANTI-TREATY RESOLUTION IN COMMISSION OF SOUTHERN GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE AND SUPPORT OF TREATY BY AFL-CIO ARE SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT, AND "DECIDEDLY FAVORABLE TOWARD RATIFICATION OF NEW TREATY." APPROVAL OF TREATY BY BOTH NATIONS, MATUTINO CONCLUDES, WILL DEPEND ON "PATIENT, TIRELESS, INTELLIGENT WORK CARRIED OUT IN JOINT FORM BY LEADERS OF BOTH NATIONS INVOLVED IN TREATY WHICH HAS GREATEST IMPACT OF ANY THUS FAR THIS CENTURY."

6-MATUTINO COLUMNIST RICARDO LINCSE SEES TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY AS AN OPPORTUNITY "TO SHORTEN DISTANCE BETWEEN PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTS, FIRM UP AGREEMENTS, ESTABLISH DIRECT AND PERSONAL TIES BETWEEN CHIEFS OF STATE, AND ... SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO MANY PROBLEMS WHICH IMPEDE PROGRESS OF NATIONS... THANKS TO NEW CURRENTS OF MORALITY WHICH PRES. CARTER HAS BROUGHT TO WHITE HOUSE, AN HISTORIC REVOLUTION IN RELATIONS AMONG PEOPLE OF CONTINENT IS OCCURRING."

7-AFTERNOON AUG. 30 PRO-GOP LA REPUBLICA COLUMNIST GRISELDA

LOPEZ CRITICIZES CHOICE OF OAS AS SITE FOR TREATY SIGNING: "WHY OAS? HAS NOT THE PANAMANIAN CAUSE CROSSED ALL CONTINENTS AND GAINED SUPPORT OF ALL NATIONS OF WORLD? WHY NOT UN HEADQUARTERS? WHERE IS RECOGNITION OF WHAT THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES HAVE DONE FOR US?.

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IN MOST IMPORTANT MOMENTS NOT ALL LATAM NATIONS HAVE SUPPORTED PANAMA. IN MOST CRUCIAL MOMENTS THEY HAVE DENIED US THEIR VOTE IN MOST SHAMEFUL FORM... THEY ARE USING SIGNING OF THE TREATY, OF OUR TREATY, OF PANAMANIAN TREATY, TO GIVE PRESTIGE TO ORGANIZATION WHOSE SUPPORT HAS SHONE THROUGH ITS ABSENCE... AT NO TIME HAS OAS INTERFERED OR BEEN CONCERNED WITH OUR DESTINY. IT HURTS ME THAT THE SITE SHOULD BE OAS. I BELIEVE BETTER, GREATER AND MORE IMPORTANT SITE WOULD BE UN HEADQUARTERS, IN WHICH OTHER FRIENDLY NATIONS WOULD PARTICIPATE, GIVING THEIR SOLID SUPPORT. WHOSE UNCLASSIFIED

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IMAGE WILL GROW AND WHOSE DIMINISH BEFORE PARTICIPATING NATIONS (AT OAS)? THAT OF CARTER OR THAT OF OUR GENERAL?"

8-PUERTO RICO: CRITICA COLUMNIST CAMILO PEREZ, WHO RECENTLY PARTICIPATED IN USIA-SPONSORED VISIT TO PUERTO RICO, BEGINS SERIES OF COLUMNS ON SUBJECT. PEREZ SAYS, "IMPRESSION WE HAVE OF PUERTO RICO IS MOST FAVORABLE...ONE OF THINGS WE APPLAUD ABOUT PUERTO RICAN IS HIS UNSPOTTED FONDNESS FOR HIS OWN(CULTURE). THEY DO NOT FEEL THEMSELVES TO BE YANKEE COLONY...THERE EXISTS A PUERTO RICAN NATION...IT IS A HAPPY PEOPLE UP TO A POINT. SINCE ITS PROBLEMS SEEM INSOLUBLE. ENORMOUS PROBLEMS WHICH WOULD CONFOUND ANYONE. LITTLE LIVING SPACE. AND PUERTO RICAN WOMEN, NONETHELESS, CONTINUE GIVING BIRTH..WHAT TO DO? FOR NOW, STERILIZATION IS BEING ADOPTED AS MEANS. WE DO NOT APPROVE OF THIS METHOD. IT IS INHUMANE. BUT THEY BELIEVE IN IT, AND THE WORLD AROUND THEM CLOSES ITS EYES." ITEM UNQUOTE JORDEN

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